



# News Release

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Contacts: Tim Church, Communications Office  
Donn Moyer, Communications Office

360-236-4077  
360-236-4076

## **H1N1 ad campaign highlights risks of infection, promotes prevention**

*Advertisements feature cutting-edge technology and real people from Washington*

**OLYMPIA** — New television and radio ads launched this week remind Washington residents of the risks of H1N1 flu and how to protect against the virus. The campaign focuses on good health habits and the importance of vaccination.

The ads are part of the Washington Department of Health's statewide H1N1 public education campaign. The TV ad uses state-of-the-art technology to show what happens when a person doesn't cover their mouth and nose when they sneeze. The radio spots feature real state residents talking about how they've been affected by this new flu.

"Vaccination is the best protection against the flu, and we're doing all that we can to encourage everyone to get vaccinated — starting with high-priority groups," said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. "These ads offer compelling reasons to take this new virus seriously and do the things that will help us avoid catching or spreading the flu."

Though flu activity is slowing in Washington, H1N1 is not going away and people should continue to try to avoid it. [The TV and radio ads](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/h1n1_newsroom.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/h1n1\_newsroom.htm) both emphasize the health effects of the new virus and the ways in which H1N1 flu is different from the seasonal flu. They remind audiences that the young and healthy are more vulnerable to H1N1. The ads promote basic prevention measures to avoid catching and spreading flu, including washing your hands, coughing and sneezing into your sleeve, staying home when you're sick, and most importantly, getting vaccinated when you can.

The television ad, which portrays a slow-motion sneeze in reverse, uses a special high-speed Phantom camera to graphically show how droplets transport germs through the air. The ad runs

in reverse to suggest that the spread of H1N1 can be reduced through prevention measures. Testimonial-style radio ads feature Washington residents talking about their personal experiences with H1N1. Two radio spots will air in English, and one in Spanish.

“Public awareness is one of the best tools we have to fight the spread of this new flu. We want people to know what they should do to increase their chances of staying healthy and avoiding H1N1,” said Selecky. “We made these ads visually captivating and emotionally compelling so people will pay attention to them and take steps to protect themselves and their families.”

These new ads are part of the agency’s extensive H1N1 outreach and public awareness efforts that include a comprehensive H1N1 Web site, Twitter messages, a telephone information line (1-888-703-4364), and printed information in multiple languages. The information campaign is funded by a federal grant. The new ads target major TV and radio stations, as well as rural and Hispanic radio stations, to ensure coverage in most areas of the state. The target audience is adults ages 18-49, with an emphasis on reaching mothers who often make the family health care decisions. The ads will air through February 2010.

For now, the H1N1 vaccine supply is limited, so only high priority groups are getting it. People in those groups include pregnant women, parents and caregivers of children under six months, healthcare and emergency medical service workers, people from six months to 24 years, and adults 25-64 with health conditions that put them at higher risk of flu-related complications. All Washington residents should get immunized once the vaccine is widely available.

More [information about H1N1](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1) ([www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1)) is available online or by calling 2-1-1.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov">http://www.doh.wa.gov</a> for a healthy dose of information.
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